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POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY VS. THE STATE

MICHAEL PARENTI

NEXT IN LINE FOR NAFTA? IMAGES FROM CHILE

HOWARD WAITZKIN

MULTICULTURALISM AND THE HISTORY OF MATHEMATICS

DIRK STRUIK

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NOTES FROM THE EDITORS

The Republican victory at the polls last fall has predictably let loose a new wave of budget-balancing in Washington and the media. In their misnamed "contract with America" (it takes two to make a contract), the Republicans have put heavy emphasis on the supposed need for a balanced-budget amendment to the Constitution, while pundits and politicians with few exceptions have proclaimed their unwavering commitment to immediate reductions in the federal deficit. The logic of this position usually runs in terms of extending what everyone knows to be true about personal finances to the case of the government. If you persist in spending more than your income, you will eventually go bankrupt and suffer the dire consequences that this implies. This also applies, with some qualifications, to other entities like corporations and local governments with which citizens are likely to have some direct experience. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that there is a strong tendency to believe that it must also be true of the federal government. This conditioning of attitudes and beliefs, which of course are widely shared by politicians and pundits, creates a situation

(Continued on inside back cover)

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POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY VS. THE STATE

by MICHAEL PARENTI

We might best think of the U.S. polity as a dual system. First, there are the elections, political personalities, public pronouncements, image engineering, and that handful of visible issues that bestir public officials and win passing attention in the media. This system is taught in the schools, dissected by academics, and gossiped about by news pundits.

Then there is the system of coercive power that is used to protect the dominant structure of the political economy, specifically, the domestic and international interests of corporate United States. This process is not taught in the schools nor usually discussed in the press. Mainstream academics and media commentators seem never to have heard of it.

This dual system roughly reflects the differences between government and state. The *government* deals with visible officeholders, pressure group politics, policy interests, and popular demands. It provides the representative cloak and whatever substance of democratic rule that has been won through generations of mass struggle.

In contrast, the *state* has little, if anything, to do with popular rule or the creation of public policy. It is the ultimate coercive instrument of class power. Frederick Engels noted that in early horticultural society, when surpluses had accu-

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Michael Parenti is the author of *Land of Idols: Political Mythology in America.* This article has been adapted from his soon-to-be-published book *Against Empire* (San Francisco: City Lights Books).

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mulated, the armed bands of retainers hired by owners to protect their holdings constituted the first embryonic state. Max Weber observed that the state's essential trait, its irreducible feature, is its monopoly over the legitimate uses of force, "legitimate" in that they are legally sanctioned by the constituted authority.

The State Against Democracy

To fulfill its role as protector of the existing order, the state often circumvents whatever democratic restraints exist within government. The late FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover noted in a 1970 interview that "justice is merely incidental to law and order. It's a part of law and order but not the whole of it." Indeed, the whole of it, the indispensable goal of the law enforcement agencies of the state, Hoover made clear by his actions on many occasions, was the preservation of existing class relations, safeguarding the socioeconomic structure from fundamental reform and revolutionary change. The preservation of public safety and justice are secondary concerns. The state will violate both when it is deemed necessary to secure the dominant social order.

Lest this be seen as a peculiarly Marxist notion, recall that the English political philosopher John Locke wrote in 1689: "The great and chief end of men's uniting into commonwealths and putting themselves under government, is the preservation of their property." And Adam Smith wrote in 1776: "The necessity of civil government grows up with the acquisition of valuable property." And "till there be property there can be no government, the very end of which is to secure wealth, and to defend the rich from the poor." We should remind ourselves that, from ancient Athens to today, the historic purpose of *democratic* government has been just the reverse, to protect the poor from the rich.

Roughly speaking, the difference between government and state is the difference between the city council and the police, between Congress and the CIA. The government

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mediates public policy. The state orchestrates coercion and control, both overtly and covertly. However, this is a conceptual distinction between what are really empirically overlapping phenomena. The overlap is especially evident in regard to the executive, which is both the center of government policy and the purveyor of state power.

The line between state and government also blurs in regard to the courts, certain administrative agencies, and those members of Congress who serve on committees that deal with intelligence and military affairs. The latter act primarily as national-security state collaborators rather than independent legislators exercising critical oversight.

The conceptual distinction between state and government allows us to understand something about the relationship between politico-economic power and popular governance. For one thing, we become more aware that taking office in government seldom guarantees full access to the instruments of state power. When Salvador Allende, a Popular Unity candidate dedicated to democratic reforms on behalf of the laboring classes, was elected president of Chile in 1971, he took over the reins of government and was able to initiate certain popular policies. But he could never gain control of the state apparatus, that is, the military, the police, the security forces, the intelligence services, the courts, and the fundamental organic law that rigged the whole system in favor of the wealthy. When Allende began to advance into redistributive politics and against class privilege, the military seized power and murdered him and thousands of his supporters. The CIA-backed, pro-capitalist state destroyed not only Allende's government but the democracy that produced it.

In Nicaragua, after the Sandinistas lost the 1990 election to a right-centrist coalition, the army and police remained in their hands. However, in contrast to the Chilean military, which was backed by the immense power of the United States, the Nicaraguan military was the target of that power and was unable to keep the government on its revolutionary course. At the same time, the anomaly of a left military sufficiently

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diffused state power so as to make it difficult for the newly installed Chamorro government to effect pro-capitalist changes at a speed pleasing to Washington.

Capitalist countries with ostensibly democratic governments often manifest a markedly undemocratic state power. In the United States, not just conservatives but cold war liberals have used the FBI to suppress anticapitalists and other dissidents in the interest of state security. They thereby helped create an independent, unaccountable political police that increasingly involved itself in a variety of unconstitutional actions. In 1947, President Harry Truman created the Central Intelligence Agency to gather and coordinate foreign intelligence. As ex-Senator George McGovern noted (*Parade*, August 9, 1987):

> Almost from the beginning, the CIA engaged not only in the collection of intelligence information, but also in covert operations which involved rigging elections and manipulating labor unions abroad, carrying on paramilitary operations, overturning governments, assassinating foreign officials, protecting former Nazis, and lying to Congress.

With its deep operations and dirty tricks, its laundering of funds, drug trafficking, and often unlawful use of violence, the national security state stands close to organized crime. And with its assassinations, intimidation of labor, expropriation of wealth, and exercise of influence in high places, organized crime stands close to the state. No wonder then that state security agencies find it convenient to collude with underworld elements. In *Official and Confidential*, a book about J. Edgar Hoover, Anthony Summers noted that the FBI retained close links with organized crime. Former CIA-operative Robert Morrow in his book *Firsthand Knowledge* records how unsettling it was to discover that the CIA was cozy with the mob. Over the years, several congressional investigative committees have uncovered links between the CIA and the narcotics trade.

Perhaps it should come as no surprise that the United States' most famous mobster, Al Capone, when reflecting on

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the wider political universe, sounded unnervingly like J. Edgar Hoover:

> The American system of ours, call it Americanism, call it capitalism, call it what you like, gives each and every one of us a great opportunity if we only seize it with both hands and make the most of it. . . . Bolshevism is knocking at our gates. We can't afford to let it in. We have got to organize ourselves against it, and put our shoulders together and hold fast. We must keep America whole and safe and unspoiled. We must keep the worker away from Red literature and Red ruses; we must see that his mind remains healthy. (*Liberty Magazine*, 1929)

In other western democracies, secret paramilitary forces of neofascist persuasion (the most widely publicized being Operation Gladio in Italy) were created by NATO to act as resistance forces should anticapitalist revolutionaries take over their countries. Short of that, these secret units were involved in terrorist attacks against the legal left. They helped prop up a fascist regime in Portugal, participated in the Turkish military coups of 1971 and 1980, and the 1967 coup in Greece. They drew up plans to assassinate social democratic leaders in Germany and stage "preemptive" attacks against socialist and communist organizations in Greece and Italy. They formed secret communication networks and drew up detention lists of political opponents to be rounded up in various countries.

Ben Lowe notes (*Guardian*, December 5, 1990), "The operations flowed from NATO's unwillingness to distinguish between a Soviet invasion and a victory at the polls by local Communist parties." As far as NATO was concerned, there was not much distinction between losing Europe to Soviet tanks or to peaceful ballots. Indeed, the latter prospect seemed more likely. The Soviet tanks could not roll without risking a nuclear conflagration, but through the ballot box the anticapitalists might take over whole countries without firing a shot.

One is reminded of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's comment, supporting the overthrow of Chilean democracy: "I don't see why we need to stand by and watch a country go communist because of the irresponsibility of its own people."

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The function of these secret operations was to make sure that the western democracies did not move in an "irresponsible"—that is, anticapitalist—direction.

In the United States, various right-wing groups, with well-armed paramilitary camps and secret armies, flourish unmolested by the Justice Department, which does not find them in violation of any law. Were they anticapitalist armed groups, they would likely be attacked by federal and local police and their members killed, as happened to the Black Panther Party in various parts of the country in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Conservative Consistencies

In their private talks and letters to each other, the framers of the U.S. Constitution repeatedly asserted that an essential purpose of government was to resist the "leveling tendencies of the masses" and secure the interests of affluent property holders against the competing demands of small farmers, artisans, and debtors. In short, they wanted a stronger state in order to defend the haves from the have-nots.

Today, conservative theorists represent themselves as favoring laissez-faire policies: the less government the better. In practice, however, the "free market" system is rooted in state power. Every corporation in the United States is publicly chartered, made a legal entity by the state, with ownership rights and privileges protected by the laws, courts, police, and army. If public authority did not exist, there would be no legally established private corporations.

It is ironic that those conservative interests—so dependent on government grants, loan guarantees, tax credits, land giveaways, price supports, and an array of other public subsidies—keep denouncing the baneful intrusions of government. However, there is an unspoken consistency to it, for when conservatives say they want less government, they are referring to human services, environmental regulations, consumer protection, and occupational safety, the kind of things

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that might cut into business profits. These include all forms of public assistance that potentially preempt private markets and provide alternative sources of income to working people, leaving them less inclined to work for still lower wages.

While conservative elites want less *government* control, they usually want more *state* power to limit the egalitarian effects of democracy. Conservatives, including ones in the Democratic Party like President Clinton, want strong, intrusive state action to maintain the politico-economic status quo. They prefer a state that restricts access to information about its own activities, takes repressive measures against dissidents, and in other ways acts punitively not toward the abusers of power, but toward their victims.

Conservative propaganda that is intended for mass consumption implicitly distinguishes between government and state. It invites people to see government as their biggest problem. At the same time, such propaganda encourages an uncritical public admiration for the state, its flag and other symbols, and the visible instruments of its power such as the armed forces.

An Executive State

The executive, be it monarch, prime minister, or president, usually stands closer to state functions than the legislature. Some European systems have a prime minister, who deals with legislative and budgetary agendas and other governmental affairs, and a president, who is commander-in-chief of the armed forces and head of state—a duality that gives unspoken embodiment to the distinction between government and state. In the U.S. system, the executive combines the functions of prime minister and president, of state and government, of party leader and constitutional monarch.

Marx grasped the special role of the executive in the maintenance of state power and class supremacy. In *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, he noted that the president of the Second Republic in France represented the entire

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nation rather than a particular district. The National Assembly exhibits in its individual representatives "the manifold aspects of society," but it is the president who is "the elect of the nation," an embodiment of the nation-state.

Marx is often misquoted as having said that the state is the executive committee of the bourgeoisie. Actually, in *The Communist Manifesto,* he and Engels say that "the executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie." Thus they recognize the particular class function of the executive. They also implicitly acknowledge that bourgeois government is not a solid unit. Parts of it can become an arena of struggle.

This is true even within the executive branch itself. Thus, the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Housing and Urban Development sometimes deal with constituencies and interests that differ markedly from those of the executive as represented by the Pentagon, the Department of Defense, or the Departments of Treasury and Commerce. It is up to the president to resolve the conflicts that arise among these pluralistic interests, making sure that the state remains essentially undiminished.

Nesting within the executive is that most virulent purveyor of state power: the national security state, an informal configuration of military and intelligence agencies, of which the CIA is a key unit. The president operates effectively as head of the national security state as long as he stays within the parameters of its primary dedication—which is the maximization of power on behalf of both particular corporate interests and the overall global capitalist accumulation process. If a progressive such as Jesse Jackson were elected president, he would have a hard time getting control of the national security state, assuming he would be allowed to survive in office.

In 1977, President Carter tried to appoint Theodore Sorenson as director of the CIA. Sorenson, a high-profile liberal, had been a conscientious objector and had filed affidavits defending Daniel Ellsberg and Anthony Russo for

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their role in releasing the Pentagon Papers. Conservative Republicans on the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, along with Democrats like chairperson Daniel Inouye, opposed Sorenson. They said his association with a law firm that dealt with countries in which the CIA had a great deal of influence might cause a "conflict of interest." They questioned his use of classified documents when writing a book and raised a number of other rather unconvincing complaints.

As reported in the *New York Times* (January 18, 1977), "Congressional sources close to the committee suggested that behind such objections lay the conviction on the part of several senators that the CIA director should be a more hardline conservative figure than Mr. Sorenson." Officials in the CIA itself quietly made known their opposition and Sorenson's candidacy was withdrawn.

After John Kennedy assumed office in 1961, CIA director Allen Dulles regularly withheld information from the White House regarding various covert operations. When Kennedy replaced Dulles with John McCone, the agency began to withhold information from McCone. Placed at the head of the CIA in order to help control it, McCone was never able to penetrate to the deeper operations of the agency.

A president who works closely with the national security state can usually operate outside the laws of democratic governance with impunity. Thus President Reagan violated several provisions of the Arms Export Control Act, including one requiring that he report to Congress when major military equipment is transferred to another country. He violated the Constitution by engaging in a war against Grenada without congressional approval. He violated the Constitution when he refused to spend monies allocated by Congress for various human services.

Reagan and other members of his administration refused to hand over information when specific actions of theirs were investigated by Congress. By presidential order, he removed Congress's restrictions on the CIA's surveillance of

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domestic organizations and activities—even though a presidential order does not supersede an act of Congress. His intervention against Nicaragua was ruled by the World Court, in a 13 to 1 decision, to be a violation of international law, but Congress did nothing to call him to account. He was up to his ears in the Iran-contra conspiracy but was never called before any investigative committee while in office. In its unpunished, illegal acts, the executive demonstrates the gangster nature of the state.

Expose as Cover-Up

With enough agitation and publicity, government sometimes is able to put the state under public scrutiny and rein it in—a bit. During the late 1970s, House and Senate committees investigated some of the CIA's unsavory operations. Congress laid down restrictive guidelines for the FBI, investigated the skulduggery of the Iran-contra conspiracy, and conducted other important inquiries that proved limited in scope and impact. What remains unquestioned throughout all these exposures are the policy premises and class dedications of the national security state itself.

The Iran-contra hearings reveal the damage-control function of most official inquiries. As representatives of popular sovereignty, the Joint Select Committee of Congress investigating the conspiracy had to reassure the public that these unlawful, unconstitutional doings would be exposed and punished. However, such exposure conflicted with the first rule of the state, which is, that democracy should never do anything to destabilize the state itself.

The process of legitimation through rectification is a two-edged sword. It must go far enough to demonstrate that the system is self-cleansing, but not so far as to destabilize the executive power itself. So the same congressional investigators who professed a determination to get to the bottom of Iran-contra were also reminding us that "this country needs a successful presidency," meaning that after the scandals of

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Watergate and President Nixon's downfall, they had better not uncover too much and risk further damage to executive legitimacy.

In sum, the investigation was both an expose and a coverup, unearthing wrongdoing at the subordinate level while leaving President Reagan and Vice-President Bush largely untouched. The purpose was to enhance the legitimacy of the state by unearthing some of the malfeasance and denying the existence of the rest.

Keeping the Government in Line

Generally, the state is more effective in reining in the government than vice versa. Congressional intelligence committees are usually occupied by members of both parties who identify closely with the needs of the national security state. The Bush administration was reportedly stunned by the appointment of five liberals to the House Intelligence Committee (of twenty or so members). By registering its disapproval, the administration was saying in effect that the committee has a distinctive relationship to the state and that there should be a special ideological test for its members.

Lawmakers who fail the state's ideological test but who occupy key legislative positions run certain risks. When Jim Wright (D-Tex.), became Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, he began raising critical questions about CIA covert actions against Nicaragua. (Wright also took a friendly position toward labor, civil rights, the environment, and human services.) Here was a prominent leader publicly questioning a major policy of U.S. imperialism—though Wright never actually called it imperialism, of course.

Criticisms of national security state policy from a leftist or even liberal perspective usually are denied exposure in the media. But because the Speaker of the House was not someone who could easily be ignored, his charges received press coverage. Indeed, he was taken seriously enough to be at-

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tacked editorially by the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* for his comments on Nicaragua.

At the time, I began to wonder aloud if Jim Wright might have a mysterious fatal accident or die suddenly of natural causes. But nowadays there is a neater way of getting rid of troublesome officeholders. The Republican-controlled Justice Department did a thorough background check on Wright and found questionable financial dealings—not too difficult to do in regard to most politicians who are ever in need of campaign funds. He allegedly had accepted improper gifts from a Texas developer and a publisher. A seemingly unwritten rule of U.S. bourgeois politics is that political leaders caught in shady deals can give up office in order to avoid criminal prosecution. Prominent instances of this trade-off were President Richard Nixon and Vice-President Spiro Agnew. This is what Wright quickly did. Next in line to be Speaker was Tom Foley of Washington State, a flaccid Tip O'Neill retread, who could be counted on never to raise troublesome questions about the murky doings of the national security state and the course of U.S. global imperialism.

Critics of the national security state are a minority within Congress. Generally, congressional leaders are complicit with the state and with their own disempowerment. Most of them go along with the secrecy that enshrouds CIA operations and U.S. foreign policy. Members serving on intelligence committees rarely fulfill their oversight function; they do not ask too many questions about secret operations, dirty tricks, weapons testing, nuclear arms, counterinsurgency, and aid to tyrants. If one questions too much, then questions might be raised about one's loyalty: why does this member want to know all these secrets? So they allow the state to go largely unpoliced.

During the Iran-contra hearings, Rep. Jack Brooks (D-Tex.), taking his investigative functions seriously, asked Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North if there was any truth to the story that he had helped draft a secret plan, code-named Rex Alpha 84, to suspend the Constitution and impose martial law in the United States. A stunned expression appeared on North's

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face and the committee chair, Senator Daniel Inouye, stopped Brooks from pursuing the question, declaring in stern tones, "I believe the question touches upon a highly sensitive and classified area. So may I request that you not touch upon that, sir?"

Brooks responded that he had read in several newspapers that the National Security Council had developed "a contingency plan in the event of emergency that would suspend the U.S. Constitution, and I was deeply concerned about it." Inouye again cut him off. It was a tense moment. The committee's leadership was inadvertently admitting that it would refrain from asking about a secret, illegal plan devised by persons within the national security state for a military coup d'état in the United States.

Constitutional Tyranny

The Constitution has provisions that apply directly to state functions, for instance, the power to organize and arm the militia and call it forth to "suppress insurrections." Provision is made for "the erection of forts, magazines, arsenals, dock-yards, and other needful buildings" and for the maintenance of an army and navy for both national defense and to establish an armed federal presence within potentially insurrectionary states—a power that was to prove most useful to the monied barons a century later when the army was used repeatedly to suppress industrial strikes. Today the control of strikes is a task largely carried out by the police and National Guard.

Article I, Section 9, of the Constitution says that the writ of habeas corpus, intended to defend individuals from arbitrary arrest, can be suspended during national emergencies and insurrections. A presidential edict is sufficient for that purpose. In effect, the Constitution provides for its own suspension on behalf of executive-state absolutism.

The national security state has largely succeeded in removing much of its activities from democratic oversight.

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The CIA has a secret budget that is explicitly in violation of Article I, Section 9, which reads in part:

> No money shall be drawn from the Treasury but in consequence of appropriations made by law. And a regular statement and account of the receipts and expenditures of all public money shall be published from time to time.

There are no published statements of expenditures for the intelligence community, guessed to be between $35 billion and $50 billion a year. Its appropriations are hidden in other parts of the budget and are unknown even to most members of Congress who vote the funds.

Sometimes the state's determination to set itself above and outside the Constitution is not done secretly but quite overtly, as during the Gulf crisis when Secretary of State James Baker publicly stated, "We feel no obligation to go to Congress for a declaration of war," and President Bush announced he would commit troops to combat regardless of whether he got a single supporting vote in Congress. Rather than being censored for such a lawless declaration and for acting as if the army were his personal force, Bush was hailed in the media for his "strong leadership."

One is reminded of Teddy Roosevelt's boast almost a century ago regarding his imperialist intervention in Panama: "I took the Canal Zone and let Congress debate." The danger of the executive is that it executes. It has its hands on the daily levers of command and enforceable action.

The State in Society

Having said that the national security state is removed from the democratic process, I do not wish to imply that it is removed from our lives. In fact, it reaches deeply into various areas of society. Consider organized labor. In collaboration with the national security state, the AFL-CIO leadership has sponsored organizations like the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD) in Latin America, along with similar ones in Africa and Asia, dedicated to building collab-

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orationist, anticommunist, procapitalist unions that undermine the more militant leftist ones both at home and abroad.

The national security state exercises an influence over the corporate media. The CIA owns numerous news organizations, publishing houses, and wire services abroad, which produce disinformation that makes its way back to the states.

In the United States, the CIA has actively trained local police Red squads in methods of surveillance and infiltration. The narcotics traffic has been supported in part by elements in the CIA and various local police forces with the inevitable effect, and probably actual intent, of disorganizing and demoralizing the inner city masses and discouraging militant community leaders from emerging.

Numerous crime bills have contained "counterterrorist" measures that pose more dangers to our freedom and security than anything terrorists might do. President Reagan proposed a bill that would have made it a felony to give support to terrorists. Since he had designated the Salvador guerrillas as terrorists, then anyone doing solidarity work for democratic dissidents and rebels in El Salvador could have been prosecuted for aiding and abetting "terrorism." So the state tries to repress anti-imperialist efforts and defend the empire by repressing democracy itself. (The Democratic-controlled Congress refused to act on the Reagan bill.)

Executive usurpation is visible in Eastern Europe, where the peoples of former Communist nations now are able to savor the draconian joys of the capitalist paradise. The political democracy that had been used to overthrow Communism soon became something of a hinderance for capitalist restoration. So democracy itself needed to be suspended or circumvented in order that the "democratic reforms"—that is, the transition to free market capitalism—be fully effected.

Not surprisingly, the presidents of various Eastern European states, such as Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Russia, have repeatedly chosen state over government, calling for the right to put aside democracy and rule by executive ukase. In Russia, President Boris Yeltsin did just

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that, using force and violence to tear up the constitution, suppress the democratically elected parliament and provincial councils, monopolize the media, kill over a thousand people and arrest thousands more—all in the name of saving democracy.

When capitalism is in crisis, the capitalist state escalates its repression, from attacking the people's standard of living to attacking the democratic rights that might allow them to defend that standard of living. Not only in Yeltsin's Russia but in Clinton's United States and most other western nations, democracy uneasily rides the tiger of capitalism. People with immense wealth and overweening power will resort to every conceivable means to pursue their interests—the state being their most important weapon in this heartless and relentless undertaking.

There are rumblings in every village from the Mediterranean to the Pacific. A force is gathering for a mighty effort. We think of that force as communistic. Communists exploit the situation, stirring every discontent and making the pot boil. The revolutions which are brewing are not, however, Communist in origin nor will they end even if Soviet Russia is crushed through war. The revolutionaries are hungry men who have been exploited from time out of mind. This is the century of their awakening and mobilization.—Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas in a speech at Tuscon, Arizona, February 14, 1951.

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NEXT IN LINE FOR NAFTA? IMAGES FROM CHILE

by HOWARD WAITZKIN

In June begins the strange atmospheric inversion of Santiago's winter. Tears and burning eyes interfere with the view of pristine snow recently fallen on the foothills of the Andes. Seventeen years of pro-development, free-market policies under the military dictatorship and its University of Chicago-trained economic advisors have led to unregulated expansion of industry and automobile transportation. Now, as Santiago's 7 million residents creep along congested streets, they breathe some of the most polluted air in the world.

On the other hand, it is a rare event to see a homeless person or a person without shoes in Santiago's streets or parks. Despite Chile's 40 percent poverty rate, the poor remain nearly invisible throughout most of the nation's capital. This invisibility reflects the military regime's success in forcefully displacing working-class and poor communities from the city's center to its periphery. Business people visiting Santiago encounter a prosperous and industrious population, struggling with air pollution but otherwise unencumbered by the

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Howard Waitzkin teaches internal medicine and social sciences at the University of California, Irvine, and is completing a Fulbright research project on social medicine in Latin America, based in Chile. His most recent book, *The Politics of Medical Encounters*, was published in 1993 as a Yale University Press paperback. The author expresses thanks to Chilean friends and colleagues who commented on an earlier draft of this article; they should best remain anonymous.

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gross conditions of poverty so common in other Latin American capitals.

In this context, the Chilean government and the Clinton administration are negotiating an expansion of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) to include Chile. During May 1994, Eduardo Aninat, Chile's minister of finance and property, came to Washington for talks about NAFTA. Santiago newspapers covered the event with upbeat, page one articles, which usually left out "North American" from the name of the treaty, referring to it simply as "Free Trade Agreement." These articles ignored or downplayed environmental concerns or protection of workers' rights, which have been crucial parts of the debates about NAFTA in Mexico and the United States. Chilean coverage of the Chiapas uprising in Mexico did not mention the rebels' criticism of NAFTA.

Legacy of Dictatorship

May 1994 also marked the debut in Santiago of *La Flaca Alejandra* ("Skinny Alejandra"), a documentary by Carmen Castillo and Guy Girard, which won the Fipa d'Or Prize at this year's Cannes Film Festival. Castillo, recently returned from exile, escaped from Chile in 1974, after the home from which she, her husband Miguel Enriquez, and other leaders of the Movimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionaria (MIR, Movement of the Revolutionary Left) were continuing armed resistance against the junta was firebombed by the secret police. In the attack, Enriquez was killed; Castillo, seven months pregnant, eventually made her way to England.

Skinny Alejandra, the endearing *nom de guerre* that Marcia Merino was assigned by her friends in the MIR leadership, was jailed shortly after the coup. Under severe torture, Alejandra cracked and divulged information that led to the firebombing of MIR headquarters. In the documentary, Alejandra and Carmen Castillo depict their reconciliation, Alejandra's coming to terms with her own treason, and the residual impact of torture many years later.

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Invited to the screening because of solidarity work, I felt strange as the only North American in an audience of more than 100 in the small conference rooms of the Salvador Allende Foundation—strange because in the palpable tension during the screening and the tearful discussion that followed, in which members of the audience related horrible accounts of their own torture, murders of family members, and the agonies of surviving while friends and relatives remain disappeared, not one word was mentioned about the complicity of the CIA, Henry Kissinger, and U.S. business interests in all these events.

To arrive at the Allende Foundation, one walks from the smog-filled, once beautiful broad avenue, the Alameda, that traverses the city from east to west, onto a small cul-de-sac whose white buildings contrast with the smoke-darkened commercial structures on the Alameda itself. The foundation, in the center of the cul-de-sac, opened during the first year after the restoration of formal democracy in 1990. Under the direction of Salvador's daughter, Isabel Allende (a sociologist and now an elected congressional deputy, the cousin of her more famous namesake, the novelist), the foundation houses a documentation center and hundreds of major art works donated by European, North American, and Latin American artists to the cultural programs of the Unidad Popular government before its fall in 1973. After the coup, this world-class collection, now mostly in storage at the foundation due to lack of display space, survived as a clandestine collection in what is now the basement of Santiago's contemporary art museum.

Transition to electoral government has achieved a space in Chile for the memory of Salvador Allende, and the return of his family members, as well as thousands of others on the Chilean left who had to leave during the dictatorship. (The change in government also has facilitated journeys to Chile by many foreigners like myself, who have unfinished business there because of involvement in the Unidad Popular's failed experiment with the "peaceful road to socialism," or in the international solidarity movement that followed the coup of

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1973.) A funeral in Santiago during 1990 commemorated for the first time the dead president's passing. A huge plaque with the names of thousands of disappeared people graces a monument in Santiago's municipal cemetery. Murals with portraits of Allende, Victor Jara, Pablo Neruda, and other cultural and political leaders who died during the first months of the dictatorship again have appeared on walls of working-class neighborhoods, but usually are hard to notice amid the graffiti of Santiago's youth gangs.

Cultural events that recall the memory of the dictatorship years—*La Flaca Alejandra, The House of the Spirits* (the film version of novelist Isabel Allende's book about Chile, which appeared this year in English with Spanish subtitles to clarify the words of Meryl Streep, Jeremy Irons, and Winona Ryder for Chilean viewers), even the Allende Foundation itself—attract small groups of participants. Inti-Illimani and Angel Parra, who helped develop with Victor Jara and Isabel Parra and many others the "new song" so widely influential in Latin America, now give concerts in barrios of Santiago to large audiences, who applaud the technical mastery of these performances, but without the sense of political connectedness that was such a fundamental part of this music in earlier years.

What dissuades more from coming or connecting? From many Chileans who were adults during those exciting and anguishing times, one hears a longing to forget the past and to move on. From the younger generation who remember only the dictatorship, one hears a desire not to learn about the sadnesses of Chilean history. On all sides, the products of the marketplace also create diversion for a well-dressed and style-conscious public; secondhand markets permit acquisition of beautiful clothes and electronic equipment at prices that even Santiago's low incomes (averaging less than $500 a month) can afford. The pornography and sex industries create diversions of a different kind, visible for instance at hundreds of kiosks and newsstands. And then there still is fear, stemming partly from years of repression, and partly from knowledge that the same military officers who perpe-

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trated the coup and ran the dictatorship still control the armed forces.

Dismantling the Public Sector

Arturo Jirón, chief of surgery at San Juan de Dios Hospital, a public hospital in a working-class neighborhood several blocks from the Allende Foundation, sat in his dimly lit office, his tall frame bent over a notebook computer, as I arrived for our interview about social medicine in Latin America. He has returned, like thousands of others, from exile to the reality of Chile's dismantled health and welfare systems.

Jirón trained on the Harvard surgical services at Boston's Massachusetts General Hospital, Peter Bent Brigham, and Lahey Clinic. Salvador Allende, himself a pathologist who as a senator during the 1950s had initiated Chile's path-breaking national health service, chose Jirón as Minister of Health for the Unidad Popular government. Although Jirón had not been particularly active politically and had no background in public health, he brought a reputation as a superb surgeon and medical educator. As Minister of Health, he convened a "council of elders" from the University of Chile's renowned School of Public Health, the first such school to be founded in Latin America.

On 11 September 1973, Jirón was the last person in the line of ministers and government officials who walked down the stairs to the first floor of La Moneda, the presidential palace which was on fire after the air force's precision bombing, to surrender to the military victors of the coup. Last in line because of his height, he says, Jirón also was the last person to see Allende alive. In answer to my question, Jirón notes simply that of course Allende committed suicide, in the tradition of José Manuel Balmaceda, the reformist president of Chile who killed himself in 1891 rather than surrender to a military coup.

After his own arrest, Jirón was tortured and sent for a year of prison, without a name, with only a number, on frigid Dawson Island near Antarctica. After his release, he worked in

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exile for fourteen years as a professor of surgery in Caracas. Following the plebiscite in 1988 that led to a transition to elected government, Jirón returned as chief of surgery in the same public university hospital where he worked before the coup.

These days, Jirón writes mainly for the clinical journal that health professionals and workers at his hospital have produced since 1953. He is working on a series of articles that he has introduced with a quote from *Alice in Wonderland*: "Could you tell me please what road I should take?" These articles describe the deterioration of Chile's previously outstanding public health system under both the dictatorship and the country's present civilian regime, whose "neoliberal" policies call for the further privatization of public industries, housing, education, and health programs.

Currently, Chile's public health sector cares for about 80 percent of the country's population, mostly working-class and poor people, yet it receives only 60 percent of public funds devoted to healthcare. On the other hand, a government-funded system, the Institution of Planned Health (Institución de Salud Previsional, ISAPRE), channels 40 percent of public funds into the private sector to cover 20 percent of the population. This prepaid system, modeled by Chilean economists after large health maintenance organizations in the United States, provides services to employees of private firms and to some of their families, as well as other public-sector employees or self-employed people who can afford to pay the monthly premiums. Conservative economists in the current government believe that a prepaid system of managed competition should be extended throughout the public health sector. Jirón is surprised to learn about opposition to managed competition and advocacy for a single-payer national health program in the United States. The problems of market models in the health sector, he notes, have received no meaningful attention in Chilean policy discussions.

Public subsidization of private health care should prove advantageous to multinational corporations in Chile, if free-trade treaties allow these firms to hire and to provide health

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benefits for larger numbers of Chilean workers. From Jirón's viewpoint, NAFTA would also help expand markets in Chile for expensive medical technology manufactured in the United States. Predictably, this technology would be made available mainly to the private sector in health care, which would further divert critically needed funds from the public health sector.

Economic and Military Scandals

The year 1994 was one with many scandals in Chile. On the financial front, the public-sector Corporation of Copper (Corporación del Cobre, CODELCO), announced an unprecedented annual loss of $260 million. CODELCO originated during the early 1970s, when the Unidad Popular government, under Allende's direction, nationalized the large copper mines owned by Kennecott, Anaconda, and other multinational corporations. Although the dictatorship increased financial compensation to these corporations, CODELCO survived pressures to privatize state industries during the dictatorship and also during subsequent elected governments whose neoliberal policies have promoted privatization. Right-wing politicians have failed so far in efforts to return to private hands the national resource that copper represents.

During the months after the announcement of CODELCO's loss, several investigations led to revelations that most of the loss stemmed from unsuccessful investments of CODELCO's profits in the futures market. These investigations also revealed that CODELCO's executives not only miscalculated in these bad investments but also may have been trying to benefit personally. Criminal proceedings have been initiated against three executives implicated in the case.

In the military realm, the notorious "Case of the Slit Throats" ("Caso Degollados") continues to threaten the delicate equilibrium between the civilian and military branches of government. During 1985, the bodies of three left-wing

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politicians were found in Santiago, all with their throats slit in the same way. In the waning years of the dictatorship, this embarrassing case contributed to the loss of international support that the military government received from countries like the United States and also heightened internal opposition to the military regime.

From the beginning, evidence implicated military officers and paramilitary conspirators in the assassinations. During the presidency of Patricio Aylwin, which began in 1990, investigations moved more quickly under the leadership of a judge, Milton Juica. These efforts culminated in March 1994, when charges were issued against General Rodolfo Stange, the current director of the national police force (Carabineros), as well as fifteen subordinate officers. From here, the case will wend its way through military courts, where substantial delays are expected, before it eventually reaches Chile's Supreme Court.

Meanwhile, the center-right government of Eduardo Frei, who was elected to the presidency in December 1993, asked General Stange to resign because of his complicity in the case, but the general refused to comply. A dance ensued, choreographed by military leaders and civilian officials in the Department of Justice. A series of announcements by the executive and military branches of government first communicated to the public that Stange would remain on paid vacation during continuing deliberations. Later, Frei personally repeated his request that Stange resign; Stange again refused. Stange's vacation was extended two more months. One week before his scheduled return from vacation, the civilian government and Carabineros jointly announced an agreement whereby Stange would remain in his paid position as director of the national police but would delegate all his duties to subordinate officers. In the end, Frei and his civilian colleagues in the executive branch lost face to the military.

Chile's constitution permits this kind of dance whenever a human rights case reaches a conclusion adverse to the military, and whenever policy differences arise between the military and civilian sectors of government. During the dicta-

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torship, the military government put into effect a new constitution, which formally separated the military and civilian branches. This constitutional arrangement allows General Augusto Pinochet, head of the military junta, to remain as permanent commander-in-chief of the armed forces until at least 1997. The same provision gives the elected president of Chile no power to fire military officers like Stange, even with extensive evidence of wrongdoing. Most observers see little chance of the military's retaking control of the country, mainly because of the unfavorable international reaction that another coup would generate. But Chile's constitution continues to support the power of the same military leaders who ran the country during the dictatorship, as well as embarrassing dances like the Stange case, which reduce the civilian government's credibility both within and outside Chile.

A constitutional inability to control the military plays a crucial role in maintaining the ultra-free-market policies established during the dictatorship. The coalition government assembled by President Frei, who was elected with a 58 percent majority, includes ministers who represent the Christian democratic, social democratic, and socialist parties. Despite the previous commitment of these parties to welfare state politics and a strong public sector, Frei and his cabinet continue to reiterate their commitment to further privatization of state industries and services. The power of the military and the weakness of democratic institutions also mean that economic policies such as free trade agreements receive little meaningful debate.

Excluded from Frei's cabinet are the Communist Party and several splinter left parties, as well as representatives of the progressive coalition, Concertación para la Democracia, that sponsored the surprisingly popular presidential candidacy of Manfred Max-Neff in the elections of December 1993. Emphasizing Chile's disastrous ecologic deterioration, Max-Neff's campaign generated local environmental organizations that remain active throughout the country.

Still hewing to a slightly updated Stalinist line, the Communist party continues to lose members. Volodia Teitelboim,

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long-term head of the Party, who survived the dictatorship because he was abroad at the time of the coup, has returned from exile and occasionally receives sardonic treatment in the Chilean media. As Pinochet left for a tour of the ex-Communist countries of eastern Europe, a cartoon in *El Mercurio*, Chile's conservative daily newspaper, depicted Pinochet dressed in a Russian hat and topcoat, asking Teitelboim, "I'm going to Moscow. Do you think I should offer them something?"

In other political actions, members of the revolutionary left in Santiago, numbering in the hundreds, occasionally toss Molotov cocktails into the streets of the capital. The resulting traffic snarls usually prompt the Frei government to issue further threats to wipe out these remnants of the guerrilla past. Some groups of workers, such as coal miners and primary care health workers, raise intermittent protests about working conditions, and residents of the low-income neighborhoods (*poblaciones*) that surround large cities like Santiago and Valparaiso raise intermittent protests about working or living conditions. But these protests remain sporadic and do not reflect organized social movements. Meanwhile, tens of thousands of university students march almost every week between the University of Chile and La Moneda subway stations, demanding rollbacks of the latest increases in student fees; no other political goals are discernible in these events.

Environment and NAFTA

In Chile's far south, talk of NAFTA appears frequently on television and in newspapers. Free trade with North America carries a promise of expanded markets for the region's products and expansion of shipping operations.

For Punta Arenas, the world's southernmost city, the prosperity that its strategic location on the Straights of Magellan has generated historically through shipping has continued to increase through exploitation of off-shore oil and mineral reserves. Contemplating the French rococo mansions of Chilean shipping magnates on Punta Arenas' central

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plaza, a visitor finds it hard to imagine that this city was once the scene of some of the strongest labor organizations in the Americas. Smashed by seventeen years of dictatorship, unions now are permitted to organize only within specific companies, rather than by trade across companies. Weak labor organizations, lax environmental regulations, and low taxes facilitated by the dismantling of the public sector provide the same attractions that NAFTA offers for Mexican entrepreneurs and their collaborators in the United States and Canada.

Throughout Chile's southern region, the climate is rapidly getting warmer. Punta Arenas, the gateway to Antarctica, seldom sees snow anymore. Near Torres del Paine National Park, one of the world's most stunning wilderness areas, sheep farmers continue to reduce the size of their herds, as the greenhouse effect and depletion of the ozone layer, experienced most drastically in this part of the southern hemisphere, reduce precipitation and increase the costs of maintaining grasslands.

Tourists to Punta Arenas usually go to the Seno Otway *pingüinera*, a remote beach where hundreds of penguins waddle in from the ocean in the late afternoon. There, the headmistress of the local German school has bought a parcel of coastline and set up a sanctuary for this species. German exchange students explain the complicated procedures that visitors must follow in walking two miles through Antarctic winds to get a glimpse of the penguins without endangering their habitat.

On the return trip to Punta Arenas, penguin enthusiasts can also observe modern mining techniques. In addition to penguins, the Seno Otway region contains coal reserves, which proponents see as a major contributor to Chile's economy as the country enters into NAFTA. Mile after mile of dirty slag fields from mining operations, situated in the otherwise pristine beauty of these vast Patagonian flatlands, makes the visitor wonder how the penguins will fare from economic progress.

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MULTICULTURALISM AND THE HISTORY OF MATHEMATICS

by DIRK STRUIK

We hear much about the necessity of learning about other cultures than our own, so called "western," culture, which is supposed to be in many ways "Eurocentric." I would like to show you with some examples how this has worked rather naturally in the development of the history of mathematics.[1]

In the customary, classical (we may call it), way of looking at the history of mathematics in "western" countries, we may start by stressing the Greek achievement in which our present type of mathematics—theorem with proof derived from axioms—was born. Then we continue, now stressing the European Renaissance mathematics featuring Cardan and Galileo, followed by Descartes, Newton, etc. until our modern times.

In this process we present a courteous bow to the Egyptians with their curious unit fractions, the Babylonians with their sexagesimals, the Indians (of Asia) with their decimal position system. And also to the "Arabs," who were so kind as to "keep the torch of Greek science ablaze to pass it over to the Europeans," to paraphrase F. Cajori—also providing, we admit, some new algebra.

What follows is an address given at a symposium on the history of philosophy of science held at Boston University on September 22, 1994, in honor of the author, whose 100th birthday fell on September 30.

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I do not criticize this method of looking at or teaching the development of mathematics when it is our purpose to show how our college mathematics evolved from the theorem of Pythagoras to the mathematics of Einstein's theory. We do not need much Egyptian or Arabic mathematics for that.

But if it comes to a survey of the history of mathematics as a whole, and especially as a great cultural asset, then this outlook turns out to be a narrow one, turns out to be, let's use the term "Eurocentric," which really is a polite word for the spirit of colonialism. The way the historiography of mathematics has developed in this century has born this out.

Let us first mention the great discoveries connected with names of Neugebauer and Thureu Dangin, showing the wide scope of Babylonian mathematics more than a millennium before the Greek mathematics. I still remember the surprise, even the shock, in the late 1920s when I found out that the theorem of Pythagoras was known and used at least a thousand years before the sage of Croton—in Hammurabi's Babylon. Babylonian clay tablets revealed many more achievements in the numerical solution of equations, compound interest, and applications. The fact that they had many tables, among them tables of Pythagorean number triplets, such as (3,4,5) or (5,12,13), shows this type of mathematics was not just utilitarian, but also "art for art's sake."

We also received a deeper insight into the nature of ancient Egyptian mathematics through the work of Giddings, Van der Waerden, and others: ancient Egytian mathematics had a sophistication of its own. Should we ask ourselves, incidentally, if those stories about the secrets of the pyramids are not all fantasy, but have a rational core? It seems that Martin Bernal, in his provocative *Black Athena*, which stresses the influence of Egyptian and Near East civilization on the Greeks, thinks so. I like to keep an open eye.

We are still getting new information about the advances in mathematics, especially in the domain of infinitesimals, made by Indian mathematicians as early as the fifteenth and sixteenth century. We find, for instance, certain infinite series

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only occurring in seventeenth-century Europe, in the works of Nilakartha, around 1500—in a form, of course, entirely different from ours. An interesting question to ask in the sociology of mathematics is: why didn't they proceed to calculus?

Especially the region in the southwest of India, now the state of Kerala, has received attention. Does its tradition live on in the work of our great contemporary Ramanujan, who lived not far from Kerala?

Our appreciation of the mathematics of Islam has also had a facelift, partly through the works of such Russian mathematicians as B. Rosenfeld. We know that they developed an ingenious theory of numerical solutions of equations, a trigonometry and studies on the foundations of geometry (partly already known in Europe at an early day). We think, for instance, of Omar Khayyam (better known as a poet via Edward Fitzgerald's very free translation) and Al-Kashi.

Incidently, we often speak of the Arabs. But these "Arabs" were Persians, Tadjiks, Jews, Moors, etc., seldom Arabs. What they had in common was their use of the Arabic language.

There is still more. Through the work of Joseph Needham and Wan Lingh, followed by others, our knowledge and respect for ancient Chinese mathematics has considerably improved where in the past I, and I believe not I alone, believed that this mathematics was self-contained, without influencing non-Chinese science—like, for instance, the mathematics of the Maya. We now know that Chinese mathematics, especially that which was developed under the Sung Dynasty (thirteenth century), probably through Indian, certainly through Islamic trade routes, had considerable influence on Asia, and maybe also later European mathematics. And why not? Think of book printing, gun powder, etc., also spreading from East to West.

This Chinese mathematics had, in its clever system of solutions of equations, developed a type of calculus reminiscent of our modern matrix calculus.

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I mentioned Maya mathematics, which brings us to America. The Mayas presented us, mostly on steles, an astronomy using a rather complicated vigesimal system. Whether it spread outside of Central America we do not know. Maybe it had affiliation with the later Aztec astronomy, which left us the famous calendar stone, now in a museum in Mexico City. And not so long ago M. and R. Ascher surprised us by showing how the Inca bureaucracy of the South American Andean region used their quipus for statistical and other work with the aid of a decimal position system. A quipus consists of a cotton string to which several strings are attached; the colors indicate different objects, such as corn, arms, taxes, etc.. The Aschers showed us how quipus can be used for mathematical work, their system reminded me of the matrix system under the Sung in China. No relation implied.

The Incas were non-literate and did not have a system of writing. This raises questions about the types of mathematics that can develop in non-literate societies in the past and present. How much mathematics was connected with Stonehenge, if this actually was some kind of astronomical observatory? No documents of objects, if they ever existed, have been preserved. We do have quipus, but only from Andean graves, since the Spanish destroyed them as witchcraft. This brings us to early ages, and raises the question of how mathematics developed in the millennia preceding the city culture of the Sumerians, where we first find symbols and methods that we recognize as mathematics. This also brings us to study certain techniques in present day social groups without a literary culture, as we find, for instance, in Africa or Polynesia. This opens a field of recent origin, called ethnomathematics.

We study here what we may call protomathematics, imbedded in counting, weaving, basket making, games, building, and the navigation methods of "primitive" (we know they were not "primitive" at all) peoples. Even kinship relations have mathematical elements (John is the brother of Peter, commutative; Henry is the father of Paul, non-commutative), which may be quite complicated from our point of view. This

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has been analyzed in M. Ascher's book entitled *Ethnomathematics*. Further information can be found in the books of Claudia Zaslavsky of the United States and of Paulus Gerdes of Mozambique. Gerdes, in his book called *Ethnogeometric*, with many illustrations tries to show how, out of the practice of basket weaving over the course of time, abstract notions of a mathematical nature (parallelism, translation, polygons) could have been developed. He even claims that the beginnings of the understanding of the theorem of Pythagoras can be understood in this way. It all shows how human labor is the source from which science—and even aesthetics—starts. An idea that was a favorite of Frederick Engels.

Such studies give rise to several questions, among them:

1) How can we use these protomathematical experiences in the classroom as an introduction to the study of modern ideas in mathematics? After all, the experiences of youngsters (and older people as well) from tribal villages are quite different from those of their contemporaries from U.S. suburbs. We may even extend ethnomathematics to mathematical notions common to urban ghettos. A good deal of thought—and practice—has been given to these facts, which again can be related to all these studies about "mathematical angst," a multicultural phenomenon, but different for different cultures.

2) What is mathematics anyway? I have used the term protomathematics, but at which point does it pass into mathematics? And can every type of study in which mathematics is involved, as, for instance, in linguistics, be included in ethnomathematics? I have no time for an answer to these questions, even if I could. But I would like to finish this talk with another subject connected with this whole theme of multiculturalism, namely that of mathematical logic, rigor, and certainty.

Professor Joseph, in his book *The Crest of the Peacock*, in which he takes issue with what he sees as Eurocentric in the way the history of mathematics unfolds in our textbooks,

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points to the historic character of our notions of logic, rigor, and certainty. It has been done before, but he sets it in the frame of his thoughts on eurocentricity (balanced by an also existing sinocentricity and other "centricities," but not tainted by colonialism). If we compare Euclid's *Elements* with the Chinese *Nine Chapters*, both dating from roughly the same period (say around 300-200 B.C.), we see that Euclid's standards, which include axiomatics, are not shared by the Chinese, who seek other possible of solutions to arithmetical problems. Both ways gave the contemporaries the necessary feeling of certainty. But when times and intellectual climates changed, so did these notions of certainty. After all, only in the nineteenth century did "western" mathematics find it necessary to look for an axiomatic of algebra and arithmetic—men like Euler and Lagrange never felt the necessity. It all adds up to the understanding that we must study and accept every type of mathematics, "western," Chinese, Egyptian, Inca, in its own cultural setting, and may ask about mutual influences.

In our customary way of describing the history of mathematics, we often tend to consider these ancient mathematics as the "childhood" of our own science. And indeed, our own school and academic mathematics grew out of them. What I have tried to stress here is that there is another, equally legitimate, way of looking at this history.

NOTES

1. Most of the authors to whom I have referred in my text can be found, with full titles of books or papers, in my *Concise History of Mathematics*, fourth edition (Dover, NY: 1987): Further: G.G. Joseph, *The Crest of the Peacock* (London, New York: Tauris & Co., 1991); M. Bernal, *Black Athena* (London: Penguin, 1984): M. and R. Ascher, "Ethnomathematics," *History of Science* 24 (1986): 125-144; P. Gerdes, *Ethnogeometric* (Bad Salzdetfurth: 1990).

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MEMORIES OF CARL MARZANI

by PERCY BRAZIL

I visited with Carl the day before he died. He had lived eighty-two years, and although his body was debilitated by a cohort of wasting illnesses, his mind remained wondrous sharp. He knew his death was imminent (he said, "I guess it's about time to check out"), and he was saying farewell to me, his doctor and friend of some forty-five years. I asked him if he had any final thoughts. "Yes," he said, "I have one. Capitalism is finished." This is quintessential Marzani. In the throes of his final hours, he can't refrain from one last expression of utter conviction of the demise of the house of capital. When I smiled and said "Maybe some day," his gaunt face became animated as he went into his last parable. "No, no, no," he said,

sooner than that. You remember last year with all the flooding in the south and midwest? They discovered what a mistake it was to build all those levees so high, to dam up the river banks. When the rain didn't stop and the levees overflowed, the flooding was the worst ever. Well, the economy is just the same. The fed, and the banks, and the market have all built in a series of devices to prevent a crash in the system. And they've built them higher and higher, just like the levees. But one day they'll overflow, and when that happens, everything will be washed away, and we'll start building a sane society.

The effort clearly fatigued him. He said, "I'm tired. Go now."

Percy Brazil is a retired physician and a long-time supporter of *MR*. Carl Marzani's memoirs are available from Topical Books, 260 West 21 Street, New York, NY 10011.

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Most readers of *Monthly Review* will be familiar with Carl Marzani's name, for he was a frequent contributor to these pages. But beyond that his name was known across the land by union workers, government officials, most leftist organizations, by the Office of Strategic Services, the Supreme Court, university students in this country, Canada, and Puerto Rico, by newspaper readers in Greece and Roumania (he had weekly columns in both countries), by Cardinals in the Roman Catholic church, by General Marshall and the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the Second World War, by Eleanor Roosevelt, Henry Wallace, Albert Einstein, Thomas Mann, by Fidel Castro and Che Guevara, by Gandhi and Nehru, W.E.B. DuBois and Shirley Graham, by Pietro Nenni and Isaac Deutscher, by villagers in China and India, by Edgar Snow, Ring Lardner Jr.—just, as they say, to mention a few. Clancey Sigal in his novel *Going Away* wrote about a household in the midwest he knew had to be lefty, because he saw a book on the shelf by Carl Marzani. Italo Calvino wrote in his book *American Diary* that Carl was "the only man truthfully and completely in love with the United States, a unique man of hard-headed coherence."

Carl was *sui generis.* Which is perhaps why he was misunderstood by some who believed they were his betters. In Spain in the 1930s, the anarchists though he was a Comintern agent; later in England the Communists there thought he was a Trotskyist; later still in the United States liberals thought he was a Stalinist; the Trotskyists thought he was a government agent (because he had been in the O.S.S.); and the Truman administration put him in jail because they thought he was a Communist. They were all wrong.

Carlo Aldo Marzani was born in 1912, and raised in Rome, Italy. His father was a socialist, and when Mussolini instituted a campaign of brutality and assassination, which boy Carl witnessed, the family left fascist Italy and emigrated to the United States in 1924. His father became a coal miner and his mother a seamstress. Carl was twelve when they landed at Ellis Island, and spoke no English. He went to school in

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Scranton, Pennsylvania, and six years later received a scholarship to Williams College. When he graduated in 1935, he was elected "Most Brilliant Student" of the class (Henry Swan, later to become a famous surgeon, came in second, Richard Helms who became Director of the CIA was third, and Herbert Stein who became chairman of Nixon's Council of Economic Advisors was fourth). As Williams' best student, he was awarded a fellowship to Oxford University, where he obtained his degree in economics. While at Oxford in 1937 he went to Spain, and was at the same battlefront as George Orwell. Orwell came back to England fiercely anti-communist. Marzani came back to England and joined the British Communist Party.

He didn't join the party because he was a Marxist, he hadn't read any Marx. In his memoirs he wrote,

> I knew little about communists or communism. I liked what I had seen of them in Spain, and while I took socialism seriously, the Spanish War was not about socialism, it was about defending the democratically elected government against a military insurrection, backed by fascist regimes, the Vatican, and the British Foreign Office. My problem with the communists was not one of ideology, but of temperament: I was allergic to hierarchical institutions.

He ignored his allergy, as he had just married Edith Eisner, a young actor who herself was a U.S. Communist, and with a what-the-hell attitude, they both joined the British Communist Party. The next year, after leaving Oxford, the adventuresome young couple set out to hike around the world. They left England in August 1938 and walked, hitched, road the rails, and travelled by steamer, all through Europe, India, Vietnam, China, and Japan, returning to San Francisco nine months later. The total cost of their journey was $745.

They moved to New York, where Carl was appointed instructor of economics at New York University. Four months later, August 23, 1939, the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact was signed. Many U.S. Communists left the party with a sense of betrayal. Once again Carl, ever the maverick, had a different view, and joined the party two days later. He thought that

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it represented *Realpolitik* (Churchill agreed with this analysis in his *History of the War*). Again in his memoirs Carl wrote:

The pact was a master stroke, as it shattered the Munich conspiracy which abetted Hitler's aggression aimed at destroying the Soviet Union and its attempts at socialism. The pact was not consistent with the ideological differences between the Germans and the Soviets, but it made sense for both, as it gave Stalin time to arm, and Hitler a secure eastern border. Not that I trusted Stalin. I knew enough about him as I had read Trotsky.

Carl was made a party organizer on the lower east side of New York, and became involved in community affairs. But the authoritarianism, the demand for unquestioning obedience to central decisions, the ideological pretensions, the secrecy, and above all, the lack of real democracy in the party, finally became too much for him and the day after Hitler invaded Russia, Carl resigned from the party. He noted in his memoir,

At Munich I saw a coalition forming to destroy the pioneering socialist society, and I saw communists as its only reliable defenders. Now there would be a grand alliance of Britain and the Soviets, and sooner or later the United States. The Soviet Union no longer needed the support of the party, the party didn't need me, and I didn't need the party. I left the Party by mutual consent. After two years, less two days, I left the Communist Party of the United States. It was for keeps.

Four months later the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor and Marzani went to Washington and joined the Office of Strategic Services. The screening board at the O.S.S. understood that he used to be a Communist, but no longer was. The head of the O.S.S., General William J.Donovan, approved the appointment. Donovan, a conservative Republican, hated Hoover of the FBI, who wanted to take over foreign intelligence. Donovan protected his turf and his staff, and the following year when Marzani was vetted by the FBI, Donovan suggested that he not admit his previous party membership. From 1941 to 1945 Carl helped shape the O.S.S. presentation division, doing research and analysis for General Marshall, the Joint Chiefs, and the War Department. He worked in Washington, London, Germany, Paris, and Rome. After the

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war he was transferred to the State Department, where he worked for a year and then resigned in despair of Truman's Cold-War policies. While on terminal leave in 1946 he had a final security hearing with a government official, at which time he said that he was about to leave the government and had nothing to add to his file.

Finished with his government work, Carl was hired to make a documentary for the United Electrical Workers Union. The film *Deadline for Action* indicted General Electric and Westinghouse for their anti-union policies, and documented their connections with industrial corporations in Germany and Italy. The movie also detailed how these firms, together with other business and banking concerns, formulated and determined domestic and foreign policy to meet their needs, and how they were in large measure responsible for the origins of the Cold War. Shortly after the film was released, Carl was indicted by the government for having lied to an authorized representative of the State Department. He could not be indicted for any statement he made to the government during the war, since the three-year statute of limitations had run out. But Congress had passed an exception to the three-year time limit: any action against *wartime fraud.* The three-year statute of limitations would only begin to run when the war ended, thus giving the Department of Justice three years after the war to indict *wartime contractors* who cheated the government during the war. (As a personal note, I can add here that when I was in China in 1978, I met Frank Coe who had worked in the Treasury during and after the war. He did not know Marzani, but he told me that it was a lawyer at the Treasury who suggested this devious way to get Marzani.) Thus Carl was indicted in 1947 for making a "fraudulent statement" to the State Department official in 1946, when he said that he had nothing to add to his file. The fraud was collecting his salary while concealing his past party membership! At the trial he was convicted and sentenced. Most of the counts were thrown out by the circuit court, and the Supreme Court split 4-4, with Justice Douglas abstaining.

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Marzani petitioned for a rehearing (only the seventh time in history that this was granted). Again with the liberal Justice Douglas abstaining, the court remained 4-4 and Carl went to jail for the next three years.

Carl Marzani was the first political prisoner of the Cold War. Initially he was in the Danbury Federal Penitentiary he was later transferred to the Lewisburg Pen. A fellow prisoner in the Danbury Pen was J. Parnell Thomas, who had been chairman of the House Un-American Activities Committee. Thomas was in jail for taking kickbacks from his congressional secretary. Carl consoled Thomas by telling him that he didn't do anything other congressman didn't do. Carl told him, "Somebody had it in for you." Thomas replied, "You too." In Lewisburg, Carl was kept in isolation for four months as the prison authorities were concerned that he might be a political agitator among the inmates. In contrast to the harsh sentencing of Marzani, his Williams classmate Richard Helms, who lied under the oath to a committee of Congress, received a mere slap on the wrist.

Marzani came out of jail undaunted, and characteristically with his love for the United States undiminished. Jail was for him a watershed. It was a time for gathering together all his experiences and understanding, to formulate one resolve: he would spend the rest of his life defending democracy.

He came out of jail in July 1951, and the following year published his first book, *We Can Be Friends: The Origins of the Cold War.* This has been described as the original revisionist history of the period, and was the first book to call into question the then-accepted notion that the Soviet Union was unilaterally responsible for starting the Cold War. Forty-one years later, George Kennan (the Mr. X of the containment theory), in an op-ed piece in the *New York Times*, conceded that the Truman administration was largely responsible. Carl next wrote his only novel, *The Survivor*, which paralleled in many ways his own experiences, and gives an insider's account of the way Washington functions. It is still a dandy read.

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For the next four years he went to work for UE, publishing the union's magazine. In 1957 he translated and published *The Open Marxism of Antonio Gramsci.* Marzani was the first to translate Gramsci into English, and in so doing defined his own approach to Marxism and politics. Carl was a Gramscian rather than a Leninist. Lenin's approach, simply put, was he who is not with us is against us. Gramsci's (and Carl's) approach was, he who is not against us is with us. Carl wrote,

> The first is an autocratic, disciplined, exclusive approach and opened the door to authoritarianism. The Gramscian method is inclusive, and opens the door to democratic politics. Not only opens the door, but requires that the door be open *ab initio.*

Carl similarly agreed with the Rosa Luxemburg thesis, insisting that socialism has to be on the side of the exploited everywhere, and that it presupposed and demanded the enlightened participation of all those that it served. Socialism could not simply be decreed, or imposed from above, but required the efforts and the diversity of people and ideas.

For fifteen years (1954 to 1969), Carl was a book publisher. Five of these years were with Angus Cameron, the renowned editor; and under the imprint, Liberty Book Club and Prometheus Paperbacks, they published original books and also distributed progressive books put out by other publishers. Their publication fired at the establishment and subverted the status quo. They published pamphlets (many written by Carl), calculated and timed to distress the power elite. These covered a wide range of topics such as *The Shelter Hoax, The Unspeakable War* (Vietnam), *Montgomery Alabama, German Hands on the Nuclear Trigger, Goldwaterism, Critical Reactions to the Warren Report, The Silent Slaughter* (about Indonesia). The usual minimal press run of these was 10,000 copies, often repeated more than once. *Cuba vs. the CIA* sold around 60,000, a third of them in bookstores in the Miami area. The book club put out nearly two hundred books, totalling over a million copies. Carl later said, "A thousand copies of subversive books in the countryside for each of my thousand days in jail."

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In the 1960s he travelled a lot, and his meetings with some well-known world figures, particularly Che Guevara, are fascinatingly detailed and will surprise some who read his memoirs.

He went out of the book publishing business after a fire totally destroyed the premises and the stock. He then went into business as a carpenter and building contractor, converting a batch of New York brownstones. However, he continued writing. His book on ecology, *The Wounded Earth*, was one of the first and one of the best on the subject. He wrote the major U.S. book on Eurocommunism, and a yet unpublished book on George Orwell.

Carl's first marriage ended. He married Charlotte Pomerantz, the well-known writer. They had children and a marvelous loving and sharing partnership which lasted until the time of Carl's death, almost thirty years. Charlotte said that Carl was her muse, and Carl said that Charlotte was his. Their home became a center for writers, political folk, activists, feminists, troublemakers, and ordinary folk. Neither Charlotte nor Carl had a racist bone in their bodies, and their circle of friends and acquaintances was truly rainbow-like. Carl was a fascinating raconteur, and he loved to talk (some would say and talk, and talk), and of course his favorite subjects were politics, democracy, and the possibilities for socialism in the United States. Carl never talked down to anyone, whether young or old or uninformed. True, he was a monologist par excellence, but he could listen as well. Or at least he learned to after he married Charlotte. In his second marriage he became more of a family man. Together with his children from his first marriage to Edith, and the grandchildren, the closeness of the Marzani clan became the epitome of what an extended family should be.

He taught his children carpentry and plumbing, and together they built summer houses on Fire Island, in New Paltz, and on the south coast of Puerto Rico. Carl was appointed professor of politics at the International University of Puerto Rico in the 1970s and taught there in Spanish for

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several years. When he lectured in Canada, he spoke French. In this country, he participated in the teach-ins at the time of Kent State, arguing quite simply that our involvement in Vietnam was straight imperialism, and prophetically that it was doomed.

Carl did not begin to slow down until he was in his late seventies when he developed the first of a variety of debilitating illnesses. He was told that he might only have a few more years to look forward to, and he then noted, "I have always had a kind of yen to know why I was always ending up on the left. So I started my memoirs to find out." The memories are a tour de force of the century, for in that sense Carl was a child of the century and was witness to the rise of fascism, Spain, and Germany. To those on the left who bemoaned the absence of any great and continued success in this century, he would respond:

> Oh yes we had. We stopped fascism. It was the left that mounted and sustained the opposition to fascism. If we hadn't, the world might have been plunged into the 1,000 years of darkness promised by Hitler.

Carl never wanted to be a radical: it was the twentieth century which ineluctably produced his radicalism, and thrust him into politics and political writing. He would have preferred to be a playwright. When he was in jail, to help pass the time and relieve some of the ennui, he agreed to sessions with the curious prison psychiatrist. Curious, because Carl was the first Williams and Oxford graduate the psychiatrist had ever met in jail. At the end he concluded that Carl wasn't a revolutionary. Carl laughed and told him, "I've always known that but they won't let you breathe. I had no choice."

In his memoirs, *The Education of a Reluctant Radical*, Carl notes:

> The logic of our system puts profits ahead of the people's welfare. The mutual support of free enterprise and liberal democracy may have been true in Jeffersonian times, but the two are now antithetical, as enterprise becomes less and less free, and democracy is more and more inherent in the contradiction between people and property which has bedeviled this country since its inception. The schizophrenia of our society is

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based on the constant struggle between democracy and the corporations.

The premise of socialism remained a bright flame throughout his life. He said that the collapse of the capitalist system, when it came, would be a threat to humanity, raising the possibility of barbarism; and therefore the ideas and practices of socialism had to be raised as an alternative not only to capitalism, but to barbarism as well (I suspect that he had this in mind when he spoke to me the day before he died).

During the last five years of his life, Carl had numerous operations and radiation treatments, but throughout it all he had a fierce determination to live and complete his memoirs. He ended up writing five volumes, and died a few days after completing the final chapter of the last book.

One final note. Even with his death, the establishment would not show compassion. The *New York Times* saw fit to print the most mendacious obituary. Those who run this country will neither forgive nor forget him. The establishment gave this working-class immigrant lad a scholarship to Williams and to Oxford. In the government he was an insider and close to the corridors of power. He had access to and knowledge of how the country was run. The power elite could forgive him for having been a Communist, as they forgave and rewarded many others. But what they could not forgive is that he betrayed their system by exposing the corruption of the corporations and the corrupting face of really existing capitalism. The book on Carl Marzani's life is now closed. He ranks with the best that the United States has produced, and as my grandmother used to say, "Beste is gut genung."

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CORRESPONDENCE

The Final Crisis of Capitalism?

by Allan Isaksen

Capitalism's deepening systemic crisis is accompanied by a planetary crisis. Developing ecological disasters such as ozone depletion, deforestation, and pollution are examples. But the ecological threat is upstaged by a myriad of social problems, themselves part of capitalism's systemic crisis, making the solution of the ecological problems difficult, if not impossible.

A summary of some of the systemic problems: In advanced capitalist countries, unemployment, homelessness, and poverty have increased for over two decades; an impoverished Third World is increasingly drawn under the control of transnational corporations with the aid of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank; an unrelenting population explosion continues while cultural and ethnic fragmentation increase; the sale of weapons, from hand guns to sophisticated weaponry, continues worldwide; and now ex-socialist countries—with an alarming increase in their own ethnic conflicts and crime rates—have endless supplies of weapons and expertise to offer the world market.

Complicating all of the above is an envy syndrome, developing worldwide. Capitalism's relentless and sickening commercialism and television programs garishly and falsely advertise the "good life" of favored populations, creating a growing sense of envy which portends only negative consequences: to the degree that it succeeds in causing economic growth, the processes of ecological destruction will be speeded; and to the degree it fails, further social conflict and fragmentation between ethnic and national groups can be expected.

Allan Isaksen is a lifetime radical still dedicated to building a successful socialism.

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All of the problems sketched above have their origins, at least in major part, in capitalist institutions and practices developed over the last several centuries. Yet capitalism has no solutions. "Solutions" to social problems are not the business of capitalism. Profit is.

Now these problems are joined by an ecological threat to our planet. And irony of ironies: quite as if none of these problems exist, capitalist ideologues have declared victory—an end to ideological history. Soviet socialism has collapsed, labor has suffered decades of defeat, welfare programs have been reversed, and the Third World has increasingly succumbed to corporate policies. The profit system reigns supreme. Its professed belief in democracy and human rights and its deceiving mantra "free enterprise" continue to fool most of the world's ruling and benefitted peoples—and that's where the political power is.

It is safe to predict: No real solutions to the ecological problems will be forthcoming. Costs are too great. Politicians and lobbyists are available for a lesser price. Ecologists, too, become drawn into capitalist politics and either sell out to the establishment's inadequate programs or become lost among the ranks of the powerless. Corporation think tanks play down the seriousness of the problems and export their worst ecological practices to Third World countries; then they use their controls on the media and in government to blunt the population's awareness of the problems—quite as they confuse and deny the nature of capitalism's structural crisis and its ideological bankruptcy.

But we must acknowledge that really existing socialism contributed to the ecological problems as well. Now, add a philosophic irony: The socialist slogan "production for use" begs the ecological questions: how much production?, of what?, and how much use? The gap between socialist theory and the planet's health remains to be meaningfully explored.

What are history's options? The main actors for meaningful change must come from among the many victims of the system: Third World peoples, labor, minorities, women, unemployed, alienated peoples, and people of conscience who sense the urgency. Since capitalism can't/won't solve the problems, we are necessarily drawn back to a new socialist drawing board.

Above all, the industrial revolution must be slowed and brought into the service of the planet as well as its people. Production and use of many of the products that pass for the good life must be stopped. This presents some tough choices because any solution

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must rely on a new vision that contains answers to the ecological as well as the systemic problems. What will induce people to give up driving automobiles? And what will induce people who want automobiles to give up the dream? It is not just "the automobile"? Our challenge is to explore and redefine new lifestyles. Can we find the key to developing a new, appropriate social conscience? Can we find the spiritual and practical strength to get political power and begin to explore and build that new life?

The egocentric, self-serving, consumer ethic of capitalism, with its many insidious strangleholds on its victims as well as its beneficiaries, must be understood; the worship of growth must be seen as the god of disaster. Where else but on a socialist drawing board can we begin to draw a schematic that will describe the problems and offer a course for real solutions?

But how much time do we have? Worldwatch Institute suggests that we have "only four decades left in which to gain control over our major environmental problems if we are to avoid irreversible ecological decline."

So where do we begin? There is a myriad of activist movements, including labor unions, ecology, community, and peace organizations; there are radical thinkers and scholars; radical publications and theoretical endeavors under way, reformers and supportive sympathizers worldwide. And there are a number of developments to watch: Chiapas comes to mind; the Greens offer food for thought; ask the Bloods and the Crips in the 'hood for their ideas; look to all racial minorities, women, lesbians, and gay men for insights that carry them past the "right" to serve militarily in oppressing Third World countries. Look to new Third World movements, new Cubas, Nicaraguas, and El Salvadors. Let's look at Cuba's "back to the land" movement and the use of bicycles. (Has the U.S. boycott jumpstarted a new engine of reason that the world should notice?) And look to labor to think internationally, quite as do the lords of capital.

The word "cooperation" suggests infinite possibilities in public programs and communal lifestyles, in agriculture and manufacturing. An enlightened, democratic, humanistic socialism must have many origins and faces in this world of varied cultures. The need for socialism controlled democratically from the bottom will become increasingly obvious in every social context. Also, might there emerge some positive residual legacy from the failed socialism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet countries, as well as Sweden, whose socialist inroads and convictions are also suffering from capitalism's worldwide victory? And might people respond positively, in increas-

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ing numbers, to growing evidence that our planet is being destroyed?

History has no mind of its own. People are the only agents of social change. The possibilities are wide open. But are we asking the right questions and setting the right goals? Or are we witnessing the final crisis of capitalism and human history?

Written 8:03 PM Feb 12, 1995 by moonlight in igc:reg.mexico

EZLN Letter 2/11/95

February 11, 1995 Chiapas Mexico

To the people of Mexico; To the national and international press; To the peoples of the world.

The Indigenous Clandestine Revolutionary Committee, General Command of the EZLN

We have made a call to all of our brothers and sisters of Mexico to detain this genocidal war that the bad government is waging against us.
The federal government is acting with lies, it is carrying out a dirty war in our villages. Yesterday around noon, fourteen helicopters bombed the area around Morelia and Gamucha, as well as shot artillery fire in the area under Zapatista control, thousands of federal soldiers have penetrated into the interior of the jungle, via Monte Libano, Agua Azul, Santa Lucia, La Gamucha Champes, San Agustin, Guadalupe Tepeyac and others. They are surrounding us with death and ugliness. We the Zapatistas, as troops and civilians, up to this point, have done everything possible to fall back, but now we do not have any other option except to defend ourselves and to defend our villages, thousands of civilians have left their homes.

Brothers and sisters, the government of Ernesto Zedillo is killing us, it is killing children, it is attacking women and raping them.

We ask the people of Mexico and all the people of the world to do something to stop this war.

Again we ask you, brothers and sisters, don't leave us alone. We will act with dignity.

Liberty, Justice, and Democracy.

Fraternally,

The Indigenous Clandestine Revolutionary Committee, General Command of the EZLN

(translated by Cindy Arnold, NCDM volunteer)

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Toward the Future?

by R.F. Price

Two articles in *Monthly Review* (March 1994) brought out once again the need to rethink our Enlightenment belief in the function of explanation in guiding us toward the future. William Tabb on Japanese capitalism and Isidor Wallimann on the world industrialization project together provided us with valuable understanding of current changes over a wide range of problems that are fundamentally shaping our lives, largely for the worse. Both writers challenged us to rethink our positions and to ask fresh questions. Tabb urged the left to reject regional economic blocs in favor of international working-class solidarity. Wallimann posed a number of questions, together with a call for a re-evaluation of the "social science theory repertoire." Tabb specifically mentions the "grandeur of the vision" and paid tribute to the "analytic powers" of Marx and Engels. But his final message was of our being "overly optimistic concerning the time frame over which international proletarian consciousness is formed."

I would like to argue the importance of a previous question: the relationship between explanation and knowhow. I believe that much of the failure of socialism and the left can be attributed to our failure to recognize this distinction and to understand the relationship between particular descriptions (conceptualization) and explanations of events and the recipes for making and doing (recipes for change) that we advocate and employ. For too long large sections of the left, myself included, saw the U.S.S.R. and a Communist Party modelled on the CPSU as the recipe for change. Now we have abandoned that model, but the theoretical failure remains.

R.F. Price is joint author with R.T. Cross of *Teaching Science for Social Responsibility*, a book in which they discuss explanation and knowhow in another context. He teaches in the School of Education at La Trobe University, Australia.

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One of the problems stemming from the time of Marx and Engels is the fear of being utopian. Knowhow (recipes) must be "realistic." An eight-hour a day movement and agreements on health and safety are certainly both desirable and possible within the framework of capitalism, and it is right to advocate them internationally. But how do we relate these recipes to the advocacy of a non-capitalist society? What explanations would serve both to improve the conditions of work within capitalism and to motivate people to act so as to end it?

The questions at the end of Wallimann's essay cried out for a distinction between explanation and knowhow and an examination of their relation. Social science theory is almost all description-explanation. Moreover, it would surely not be unfair to describe it as largely academic gamesmanship, designed to further careers and impress rather than provide knowledge to better the lives of the nonacademic. With the increasing and worldwide trend to harness academe to the needs of contemporary capitalism, it seems "overly optimistic" to expect the social sciences as an institution to work for the benefit of ordinary working people (which concept must include the unemployed!). Rather, we need to strengthen and promote such groups and publishing ventures as *Monthly Review*.

Finally, Arthur MacEwan's Review of the Month (April 1994) called for "alternative economic programs" and spoke about "equality, full employment, and community." But these recipes for doing (knowhow) need to be related to descriptions/explanations of a socialist (use-value motivated) alternative, as well as explanations of the current world economy. While people may desire community, meaningful democracy, and real control over affairs that affect their everyday lives, they neither understand (have explanations of) a workable alternative nor have recipes for getting there.

All this, of course, concerns theory. It is a truism that social change requires action, practice. But practice is always theory-dependent, and without the right theory, it will fail. But that is another question that *Monthly Review* is surely well able to give guidance on.

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Dark Victory: Capitalism Unchecked

by Martin Hart-Landsberg

Walden Bello with Shea Cunningham and Bill Rau. *Dark Victory: The United States, Structural Adjustment, and Global Poverty* (Oakland: Institute for Food and Development Policy, 1994, 160 pp. $12.95).

The late 1980s were supposed to mark the "end of history." Communism's collapse, we were told, showed once and for all that free market capitalism represents the pinnacle of social evolution. "Market forces" now dominate the lives of most of the world's people, but rather than the predicted burst of growth and flowering of democracy, the result has been widespread economic crisis and social decay. The reason, according to the "new wisdom," is that we have entered the "age of anarchy." Only a few of us (most of whom live in the developed capitalist world) will have the chance to enjoy the end of history; the great majority of the world's people are doomed to be "stuck in history," or perhaps better said, condemned to move "backward in time." But it is not capitalism's fault. In a revival of Malthusian thinking, it turns out that the poor are responsible for their own situation—overpopulation and defective cultures lead to environmental decay and the erosion of nation-states and the rule of law. The resulting anarchy also threatens to destroy our own chances for survival. In short, there is really nothing we can do but prepare to defend ourselves from the (non-white) barbarians massing at the gate.

Martin Hart-Landsberg teaches economics at Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Oregon. His book, *The Rush to Development: Economic Change and Political Struggle in South Korea,* is available for $18.00 from Monthly Review Press.

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In point of fact, there is much we can do. As a start, read *Dark Victory*. Although not written specifically to counter this new wisdom, the book helps illuminate where this thinking is coming from and why and how it needs to be challenged.

The New Wisdom

Robert D. Kaplan, writing for the *Atlantic Monthly*, was one of the first to popularize this notion of "the coming anarchy."[1] In a rather lengthy piece, we learn about "what is occurring in West Africa and much of the underdeveloped world: the withering away of central governments, the rise of tribal and regional domains, the unchecked spread of disease, and the growing pervasiveness of war."

Driving this process is an environmental crisis caused by deforestation, soil erosion, water depletion, air pollution, and overpopulation. With resources scarce, people are driven to fight or flee for survival, thereby further weakening national order and national borders. Sadly, given the nature of many Third World societies, even new resource technologies and free market development cannot help. Under these conditions, anti-western totalitarian states such as Iraq and hostile ideologies such as Islamic extremism can be expected to flourish. Thus, as the Cold War gives way to the age of anarchy, the "environment" comes to replace the Soviet Union as "the national security issue of the early twenty-first century."

To help us understand the world we live in, Kaplan tells us to imagine that we are wealthy people in an air-conditioned stretch-limousine, driving around the potholed streets of New York City where homeless beggars live. There are threats all around. One of the most immediate comes from the massive wave of immigrants who want to escape their fate by coming to the United States. Limousines, of course, are only so big. But more is at stake than room. Accepting these immigrants might cause us to lose our own sense of national cohesion. And, warns Kaplan, if we lose our national identity and patriotism, we might eventually lose our own seat in the limousine.

Walden Bello and his associates Shea Cunningham and Bill Rau also recognize that the last two decades have been hard ones for the people of the South. But in sharp contrast to Kaplan, who explains the African experience as one of "nature unchecked" and approvingly quotes a scholar who believes that "for too long we've been prisoners of 'social-social theory,' which assumes there are only

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social causes for social and political changes," *Dark Victory* tries to confirm analytically and empirically the widely shared sense that the collapse of the South and the greater insecurity in the working and living conditions of most people in the North were consequences of the same thing—a sweeping strategy of global economic rollback unleashed by northern political and corporate elites to consolidate corporate hegemony in the home economy and shore up the North's domination of the international economy.

The Challenge from the South

The book's argument is straightforward. The U.S. offensive against the people of the South was designed to reverse three trends which, over the 1960s and 1970s, became increasingly threatening to corporate profitability.

First, active state intervention in economic affairs—which in many countries included strategic planning, development finance, public enterprise, and trade protection—generated significant (although admittedly uneven) growth. To sustain this growth, governments in major Third World countries like Brazil and Mexico were, by the late 1970s, closing off key sectors of their economies to U.S. corporate investment. The situation, from U.S. capital's point of view, was even worse in the newly industrializing countries (NICs), especially South Korea and Taiwan. U.S. firms were not only locked out of markets, they were also forced to compete against exports in the U.S. market.

Second, anti-capitalist, national liberation movements came to power in Mozambique, Angola, Guinea-Bissau, Vietnam, Laos, Kampuchea, Nicaragua, Iran, and Zimbabwe. And, in spite of active support for anticommunist dictatorships, the U.S. government seemed unable to stop the growth of such movements in other countries.

Finally, growing numbers of Third World leaders began to organize and call for the restructuring of the existing international capitalist system. New organizations such as the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the Group of 77 were formed to strengthen Third World unity and power. The Non-Aligned Nations Movement brought together governments of countries as diverse as Cuba, Brazil, Libya, and Saudi Arabia to demand a New International Economic Order. In fact, a related Action Program was adopted by a special session of the United Nations

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General Assembly in 1974. OPEC's price actions gave an indication of the potential political and economic power available to a unified South in control of its own resources.

Reaganism

U.S. post-Second World War policy had been guided by a strategy known as "containment liberalism." In broad terms this meant a foreign policy defined by anti-communism and a domestic policy shaped by New Deal, Keynesian thinking. With respect to the South, policymakers viewed Third World growth positively, believing that it would help ensure the political stability of existing non-communist regimes as well as generate new markets for U.S. corporations.

Given the trends noted above, the U.S. corporate elite was, by the end of the 1970s, ready to reject containment liberalism and embrace "Reaganism," which disagreed with containment liberalism's premise that a more prosperous South would work in the interest of the United States. Indeed, many people in the new administration believed that the interests of the North were fundamentally antagonistic to those of the South, and that the task of the moment was to repair the damage through firm policies aimed at rolling back the South and resubordinating the increasingly unmanageable Third World within a U.S.-dominated world economic system.

Right-wing think tanks took leadership in promoting the view that Third World troubles were of their own making. Having messed up their economies because of state intervention, Third World leaders were now seeking to use the international arena (including organizations like the UN and World Bank) to demand handouts from the United States. Even more serious were Third World demands for international ownership and control over the world's natural resources through various treaties designed to regulate access to the seabeds, space, and Antarctica. Such notions dovetailed nicely with right-wing critiques of past U.S. state activity which, through its support of welfare programs, environmental regulations, and high levels of employment, was also seen as undermining the efficiency and profitability of U.S. corporations.

Thus, in the name of promoting "competition" and "free enterprise," the U.S. state set out to refashion a world open to U.S. transnational capital. In terms of the South this meant one thing:

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reopen Third World economies by rolling back the Third World state. Before long, the Reagan administration found IMF/World Bank structural adjustment programs (SAPs) to be one of its most effective policy instruments.

Rollback

Third World governments, trapped in debt crisis, were forced to negotiate SAPs with the World Bank and IMF as a condition for obtaining new international credits. By the beginning of 1986, twelve of the top fifteen Third World debtors had agreed to SAPs. By the end of 1992, approximately 267 SAPs had been approved. Sub-Saharan Africa was the most structurally adjusted region, with thirty-six of the forty-seven countries undergoing some form of structural adjustment.

The heart of *Dark Victory* is a careful examination of the logic and consequences of these structural adjustment programs on Third World people and economies. In broad brush, SAPs require Third World states to reduce spending on social programs in the name of fighting inflation and reducing imports; slash wages to boost exports as well as reduce inflation and imports; and drop controls on imports, remove restrictions on foreign investment, and privatize state enterprises to increase efficiency and boost exports. Kaplan does not mention it, but SAPs played a prominent role in undermining state power in Africa.

Considering that SAPs are designed primarily to weaken Third World states and open up Third World economies, it should come as no surprise that Bello and his associates are easily able to demonstrate that such programs leave most countries and their populations significantly worse off. Among the common results: deindustrialization, an increase in malnutrition and diseases such as tuberculosis and cholera, and greater exploitation and destruction of the environment. Kaplan may see in all this "nature unchecked," but *Dark Victory* documents the role of SAPs in creating the conditions for "anarchy."

The book also makes it clear that SAPs have been remarkably successful if judged from transnational capital's point of view. Structural adjustment loans and structural adjustment policies created numerous profit-making opportunities for transnational corporations. In other words, World Bank/IMF policies reflect corporate interests, not misguided economics. This point is not always appre-

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ciated, even by those who oppose SAPs; many still think that the World Bank/IMF can be reformed.

Not facing a debt crisis, the NICs have been able to avoid SAPs. They have not, however, been able to avoid the pressure of rollback. *Dark Victory* shows how the U.S. government has repeatedly used the threat of trade war to force NIC states to reduce their economic activity and open up their economies to U.S. imports and investment. The new GATT agreement is an important part of the U.S. offensive. Although promoted as a generalized free trade agreement, it is primarily designed to restrict state direction of economic activity.

Finally, *Dark Victory* also shows how rollback has been applied in the United States. Reaganism represented an aggressive attempt to dismantle all laws, programs, and agencies that supported working people or reduced corporate profitability and freedom of action. The outcome, not surprisingly, was similar to what rollback produced in the South: greater poverty and hunger, growing inequality and social polarization, and decaying neighborhoods and industries.

One of *Dark Victory*'s greatest strengths is the clarity with which it shows how U.S. economic and political elites have been pursuing a comprehensive strategy to create a world free for profit-making regardless of the social and environmental costs. The book's policy focus also makes clear the need for movement building and political resistance. In making their argument, however, Bello and his associates come dangerously close to advancing a kind of state-voluntarist view of change, one in which state policies are seen as shaping events rather than being shaped themselves by capitalism's internal logic, specifically its crisis tendencies and restructuring imperatives. Although unintended, such a view could easily lead to a political activism more oriented toward reform than structural transformation.

My only other criticism of *Dark Victory* concerns the way Bello and his associates compare U.S. and Japanese policy choices to highlight the counterproductive and short-sided nature of Reaganism. The result is to overstate the virtues of Japanese capitalism. Japan's high growth rate is not unrelated to its exploitation of the people and resources of Asia. Its high rate of capital accumulation is financed to a considerable extent by the low wages paid, and low level of social security programs provided, to most Japanese workers. And the job security Japanese corporations offer their core (male) workers also comes with a high price: a production regime that ruthlessly exploits the great majority of Japanese workers as well as those core workers who must seek new employment after being

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forced to "retire" at the age of fifty-five. In short, Japan does not offer a model for an economically superior and more humane form of capitalism.[2]

In building an alternative to Reaganism, Bello and his associates believe that there is "no room for nostalgia." The NIC model of military dictatorship and high-speed, environmentally damaging growth can no longer work. State socialism has also exhausted its potential. Similarly, we in the developed capitalist countries must move beyond the New Deal Keynesianism of the past.

While refusing to give a name to their alternative vision, they are clear that it must be based on

> the subordination of the market, of the institutions of production and distribution, to community. The reintegration of the economy into the community cannot be left to the invisible hand of the market, for that hand constantly erodes communal bonds and makes individual insecurity the human condition.

They also believe that such an alternative social order requires new forms of economic cooperation operating at all levels, including between nations, and that these new forms can only be built on a base of meaningful international labor solidarity. These certainly seem like sound starting principles for movement building.

Capitalists may be enjoying their "dark victory" but given the economic, political, social, and environmental contradictions inherent in their rollback strategy, there is reason to be hopeful about the future.

NOTES

1. Robert D. Kaplan, "The Coming Anarchy," *Atlantic Monthly*, February 1994.
2. For more discussion of these points, see the forthcoming work, *Japan in Historical Context: Lessons for the U.S. Left*, by Paul Burkett and Martin Hart-Landsberg.

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A Lincoln Communist

by W.H. Locke Anderson

Gerald Horne, *Black Liberation/Red Scare: Ben Davis and the Communist Party,* Newark, University of Delaware Press; London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1994, $55.00.

On July 24, 1994, the Real Estate pages of the *New York Times* featured an article on the handsome old apartment house at 409 Edgecombe Avenue in Harlem, once the address of Walter White, Aaron Douglas, Roy Wilkins, W.E.B. DuBois, Thurgood Marshall, and numerous other prominent and distinguished African-Americans. Notable in its absence from the *Times'* list was the name of one former resident of 409 Edgecombe, Benjamin Davis, Jr., twice elected to the New York city council on the Communist Party ticket.

There are politicians who "happen to be black." Former mayor David Dinkens of New York happens to be black. Then there are "black politicians," who never let you forget it for a moment. Ben Davis was a black politician. He was also a Communist, and he never let you forget that either.

Gerald Horne, an activist and scholar who in 1992 got nearly 300,000 votes for the U.S. Senate from California, clearly considers that his task as a biographer is to recount Davis's life in relation to its historical context and to make his readers understand what an important figure he was in New York politics during a tumultuous period.

Davis was born in 1903 in a small town in Georgia. Soon after his birth the family moved to Atlanta, where his father started a

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newspaper, the *Atlanta Independent.* Ben Davis Senior eventually became one of the wealthiest and most influential blacks in the United States. Ben Junior grew up in Atlanta, and attended Morehouse when it was a secondary school as well as a college. But he went north to Amherst for the final three years of college and then to Harvard for a law degree. After graduation he returned to Atlanta and began to practice law, apparently destined to become a successful member of the black bourgeoisie like his father. Fate intervened in the form of Angelo Herndon.

In early 1933 the Communist-led International Labor Defense from New York took on the case of Herndon, a Communist organizer who was indicted and tried in Georgia under a conspiracy statute once used to punish participants in organized slave insurrections. The ILD had a practice of using local attorneys in their cases, and Davis was engaged for that purpose. In the course of the trial he was recruited by the party. The defense lost at trial and Herndon was sentenced to twenty years on a chain gang, but he was eventually set free following a successful appeal. Soon after the Herndon trial Davis was involved in other cases, including that of the "Scottsboro Boys." Within a year the party brought Davis to New York for his own safety. His star continued to rise in the party, and he became a popular figure in Harlem, in part because he was personally appealing and in part because the Party was an implacable foe of Jim Crow. Soon he was the editor of the *Harlem Liberator,* a party organ. (However the *Liberator* had a short life because Harlem readers were alienated by its frequent attacks on the black bourgeoisie, including Ben Davis's father.)

The Harlem of the 1930s was doubtless a lively and exciting arena for a young, attractive man from the South whose name was already well known before he moved to town. He quickly made friendships with Paul Robeson, black party leader James Ford, and many others. But the main focus of his life was the politics of the complex historical period leading up to the Second World War. The party was going through an ecumenical phase in those years, and Davis was engaged in establishing a network of political relationships. He developed a good working friendship with Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., pastor of the Abyssinian Baptist Church, which was later to be of great advantage to him and to the party. But his primary activity was the cultivation of links between the party and other organizations. The most important of these efforts was the formation in 1936 of the Negro National Congress, a grouping that included the party, the NAACP, the Urban League, and the Broth-

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erhood of Sleeping Car Porters. (The party, of course, was largely a white organization, whereas the others were almost entirely black. Indeed, Davis spent most of his adult life working in an organization that was committed to racial equality but was run mainly by white people.)

By 1943 Davis's star had risen so high that, running as the candidate of the Communist Party, he was elected to the city council with wide support from Harlem's religious leaders, including Powell, and from New York's large and talented coterie of black artists and entertainers. Even his Republican father supported him. Ben Junior recounted of the Harlem voters, "They'd slap me on the back and say: 'Davis, your father was a Lincoln Republican. You must be a Lincoln Communist. I'm going to vote for you.'" (p. 106)

The election of a Communist to the city council was made possible by two aspects of the New York electoral system: the quite ordinary division of the city into electoral districts and the unusual "proportional representation" system of voting that was used in New York at the time. In fact, when Davis first ran for council, another Communist, Pete Cacchione from Brooklyn, had already been elected in 1941.

The "boroughs" into which the city was divided—Manhattan, Brooklyn, the Bronx, Queens, and Staten Island—were the electoral districts. Each borough elected a number of city council members in rough proportion to its population. A district's members were elected "at large." That is, the boroughs were not subdivided into smaller subdistricts, each with its own council member, as they are today. On the ballots the voters placed numbers rather than checkmarks; the voter's first choice was indicated by a "1," the second by a "2," and so on. Horne explains the effect of this on the chances of the candidate of a minority party in this way:

> Proportional representation enabled the Communists to overcome the historic obstacle faced by third parties in U.S. politics, the compulsion to vote for the "lesser evil." Under PR, a voter could make the Communist his or her first choice and the liberal a second choice without the fear of "throwing away" a vote; if the Communist were eliminated, a vote still would go to the liberal, thus blocking the right wing. (p. 101)

The majority Democratic Party disliked the system of proportional representation, and although the Republicans found PR to their advantage in some parts of the city, they disliked the Communists so much that in 1947 they joined with the Democrats to get rid of it "in a fury of Red-baiting," as Horne puts it.

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Davis got nearly 20,000 first-choice votes on about 35,000 ballots cast in greater Harlem and about 15,000 additional first-place votes in Manhattan areas outside Harlem. Cacchione, after a term in office in Brooklyn, got the largest first-choice vote of any candidate in the city. Although 1943 seemed like the beginning of an era for the party, it turned out to be a "high-water mark," as the Cold War and the post-1945 Red scare were not far off.

The remainder of the book takes Davis through his first term on council, the end of the Second World War and Davis's re-election in 1945, the gathering storms of Cold War and gathering strength of the struggle for black liberation in the North, the increasingly hostile environment for the left in U.S. politics, the notorious Foley Square trial of the "CP-11," Davis's conviction, his failure to win re-election in 1949 while under prosecution, his years in federal prison in Terre Haute, Indiana, the disruption of the party by COINTELPRO, the revelations of Stalin's "crimes" at the Soviet Party Congress in the spring of 1956, and the gradual solidification of what came to be called the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s. Davis died in 1964. FBI "dirty tricks" forced a last-minute change in the site of his funeral and the FBI copied down the license numbers of those who attended.

Harlem today really needs a Ben Davis, or someone like him, and something like a Communist Party standing behind him. The pastors of some of the churches are active in defense of the rights of black people. In this capacity Pastor Calvin Butts of Abyssinian Baptist carries on the activist tradition of Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. The city councilwoman from Harlem, C. Virginia Fields, is steady, hardworking, and reasonably effective in getting material help for the community from the existing structure of government. Both these people are capable and devoted, as are many other leaders of the Harlem community. But they are not radical in the sense of questioning the existing system of property relations, and they are therefore confined in their thinking by reformist premises. Moreover, they do not subscribe to the old tradition of street rallies whose speakers constantly gave voice to the rage and sorrow of the people of Harlem and attacked people of property as well as racist whites as such.

Today the central problem of the black masses in New York is, of course, the unemployment-poverty-drugs-crime syndrome. The predominant attitude of the people with real money and power is that black people create their own troubles and that they have only themselves to blame. But things weren't always the way they are now.

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At one time New York City had a lot of light manufacturing that employed the kind of semi-skilled labor that Harlem has in abundance. Nearly all of this has been zoned out of existence. The way this came about is described in Robert Fitch's *The Assassination of New York* (London: Verso, 1993), which shows the connection between the deindustrialization of the city and David Rockefeller's plan to reconstruct it as a center of finance, insurance, and real estate corporations. This transformation had profound consequences for the employment prospects for people of proletarian backgrounds, especially if they were black. (Surprisingly, Fitch does not address the social implications of the changes he describes very fully, and Harlem is given little attention in the book: it does not merit a single entry in the index.)

The August 6, 1994, edition of the *People's Weekly World*, successor to the *Daily Worker*, apologized for "misspelling" NAACP official Ben Chavis's name as "Ben Davis" in an earlier edition. Misspelling my eye! Wishful thinking is more like it. And after the resurrection of Ben Davis, maybe it's time to reopen the old party headquarters at 101 W. 132nd Street.

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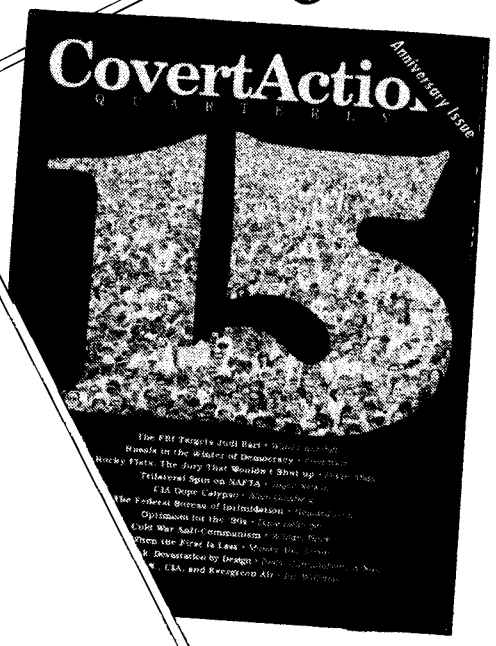

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(Continued from inside front cover)
in which public opinion, and hence political support, can be relatively easily manipulated in favor of policies designed to cut back on, or even eliminate, the whole range of services and benefits that constitute what has come to be known as the welfare state, created through a century of struggle spearheaded by the working class but widely supported by other popular classes as well. Budget-balancing and deficit-reduction must therefore be seen as the watchwords of a powerful and relatively new movement to turn the clock back to the days when the raw power of capital was still unchecked by any counterforce.

The big question now is whether this reversion to the kind of capitalism that existed a hundred years ago is a *fait accompli*, or whether it is a severe but temporary setback that can be expected to give way to renewed popular resistance an a return to what had until recently come to be considered a normal course of development for an advanced capitalist society.

In seeking an answer to this question, it is necessary to keep in mind key aspects of the country's political history. Throughout the twentieth century the Republican Party has always been a conservative-to-reactionary force; all advances of a welfare-state variety have come under Democratic administrations and in periods of economic distress and/or social upheaval: the Wilson administration (1912-1920), the Franklin administration (1932-1945), and the Kennedy-Johnson administration (1960-1968). On the basis of this history the Democratic Party has acquired the reputation of being the party of (moderate) reform. With the onset of renewed economic stagnation in the mid-1970s, however, it was not long before this reputation would be put to the test. The disastrous military and fiscal policies of the Reagan and Bush administrations, followed in the late 1980s by the most serious post-Second World War recession, set the stage for a Democratic comeback in 1992. But with the presidency and both branches of Congress under its control, the Democratic Party proved totally incapable of rising to the challenges of an economy and society in demoralized disarray. The mid-term electoral debacle was the logical outcome.

With the Democrats discredited and the Republicans hell-bent on restoring pre-welfare state capitalism, the country is clearly approaching a crucial turning point. Will the people find new and more viable forms of protest and struggle, or are we condemned to submit to a continuation of Republican rule that can only get more authoritarian and repressive as economic and social conditions deteriorate?

Whatever the answer turns out to be, we of the left have a clear responsibility to help people understand the nature of their predicament and to expose the vicious nonsense, like the supposed necessity to balance the budget, that does so much to confuse the real issues and prevent effective counteraction.

More on all of this in coming issues.

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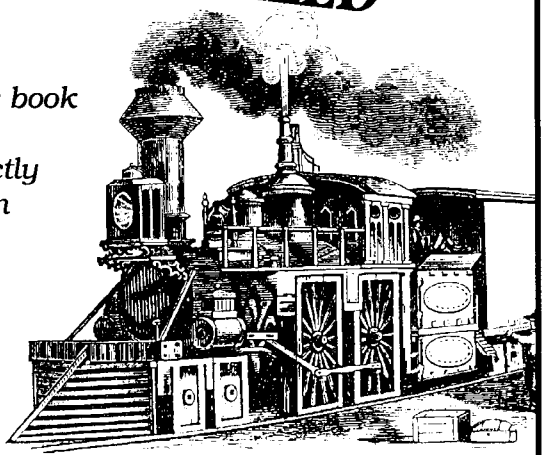

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